

Listing of Claims:

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously presented) A mailpiece feeder assembly comprising:

a lifting mechanism adapted to selectively lift a mailpiece from a stack of mailpieces; and

a gripping mechanism adapted to selectively remove the mailpiece from the lifting mechanism and move the mailpiece to a desired location.

14. (Previously presented) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 13, further comprising at least one sensor for activating the lifting mechanism and the gripping mechanism.

15. (Previously presented) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 13, wherein the lifting mechanism is moveable between an engagement position wherein the lifting mechanism engages the mailpiece, and a lifted position wherein the lifting mechanism separates the mailpiece from the stack of mailpieces.

16. (Previously presented) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 15, wherein the lifting mechanism comprises at least one suction cup.

17. (Previously presented) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 16, wherein the lifting mechanism further includes a separator element to assist in separating the mailpiece from the stack as the mailpiece is lifted from the stack.

18. (Previously presented) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 13, wherein the gripping mechanism comprises a jaw, the jaw being selectively moveable between an open and closed position.

19. (Previously presented) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 18, wherein the jaw is further selectively moveable between a mailpiece grasping location wherein the jaw closes around the mailpiece and removes the mailpiece from the lifting mechanism, and a mailpiece release location wherein the jaw is open and releases the mailpiece to the desired location.

20-28. (Canceled)

29. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 13, further comprising:
at least one platform adapted to support the stack of mailpieces and advance the stack of mailpieces to a desired position proximate the lifting mechanism; and
a drive assembly for driving the at least one platform.

30. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 29, further comprising a sensor for determining when the stack of mailpieces has reached the desired position.

31. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 29, wherein the at least one platform is selectively re-positionable along a path of the drive assembly.

32. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 31, wherein the at least one platform is slidably mounted to a guide member.

33. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 31, wherein the at least one platform includes an engagement element for selectively coupling the at least one platform to the drive assembly.

34. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 33, wherein the drive assembly includes a drive belt having a plurality of notches, and wherein the engagement element is selectively engaged in at least one of the plurality of notches in the drive belt.

35. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 29, wherein the at least one platform includes a first platform and a second platform cooperating to sequentially move a plurality of stacks of mailpieces to the desired position.

36. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 35, wherein the first platform supports a first stack of mailpieces and the second platform supports a second stack of mailpieces, and wherein the first platform is removable from the first stack of mailpieces such that the first stack of mailpieces and the second stack of mailpieces become a

combined stack of mailpieces, and the first platform is repositionable relative to the second platform to receive a subsequent stack of mailpieces.

37. (New) A mailpiece feeder assembly for moving mailpieces from a stack of mailpieces to a predetermined location, the assembly comprising:

- a moveable platform assembly for moving a stack of mailpieces to a feeding location;

- a lifting mechanism at the feeding location for separating a mailpiece from the stack of mailpieces; and

- a gripping mechanism for engaging the mailpiece from the lifting mechanism and moving the mailpiece to the predetermined location.

38. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 37, wherein the moveable platform assembly comprising at least a first platform and a second platform cooperating to sequentially move a plurality of stacks of mailpieces to the feeding location, and a drive assembly for driving the first platform and second platform; wherein the first platform supports a first stack of mailpieces and the second platform supports a second stack of mailpieces, and wherein the first platform is removable from the first stack of mailpieces such that the first stack of mailpieces and the second stack of mailpieces become a combined stack of mailpieces, and the first platform is repositionable relative to the second platform to receive a subsequent stack of mailpieces.

39. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 37, wherein the lifting mechanism comprises at least one suction cup moveable between an engagement position wherein the at least one suction cup engages the mailpiece, and a lifted position wherein the at least one suction cup separates the mailpiece from the stack of mailpieces.

40. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 37, wherein the gripping mechanism comprises a jaw, the jaw being selectively moveable between an open and closed position, the jaw further being selectively moveable between a mailpiece grasping location wherein the jaw closes around the mailpiece and removes the mailpiece from the lifting mechanism, and a mailpiece release location wherein the jaw is open and releases the mailpiece to the predetermined location.

41. (New) The mailpiece feeder assembly of Claim 37, wherein the mailpieces are flats mailpieces.